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SIPDIS

EEB/TPP/MTAA/ABT FOR MSZYMANSKI AND JBOBO, STATE FOR
WHA/BSC MDASCHBACH, WHA/ESPC FCORNEILLE

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: MONTEVIDEO PROPOSAL FOR BIOTECHNOLOGY SPEAKER ON
BIOFUELS

REF: STATE 129940

¶1. Summary: Post has prepared a proposal for the organization of a biofuels speaker program in Uruguay in FY2009. Given Uruguay's interest in energy diversification and our recent bilateral alternative energy MOU, post believes this funding possibility could spur development of Uruguay's biofuels sector and serve to strengthen our burgeoning scientific ties. End Summary.

PROPOSAL

¶2. Embassy Montevideo requests funds to sponsor a Spanish-speaking expert on biofuels to conduct outreach and a series of specific technical meetings with participants from Uruguay's energy sector and other national actors. The proposed program will focus discussion on issues relevant in Uruguay and the region at large, such as energy efficiency and policy-making. The Embassy will leverage media, government, academia, NGO, and private sector contacts to maximize the impact of this event.

BACKGROUND

¶3. The GOU is striving to reduce energy costs and its dependency on oil imports and energy supplied by Argentina and Brazil. The major targets of the GOU are: 1) to focus on production and consumption efficiencies, and on the security and quality of its energy supplies; 2) to cover basic energy requirements, both in terms of quantity and quality; and 3) to focus on diversifying energy sources, including renewable energy. A principal objective is to develop a matrix that will allow the use of different and/or combined technologies and resources. To achieve these goals, the GOU is encouraging the production of biofuels, and a law was passed in November of 2007 to this effect. The USG and GOU also signed an MOU on Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency in October 2008 to promote cooperation in this field. Given Uruguay's dynamic forestry sector, there is particular interest in producing biofuels from biomass.

PROPOSED PROGRAM

¶4. The week-long program will bring together a U.S. biofuels expert with journalists as well as with policy makers and producers from Uruguay's energy sector. It will include media interviews, appearances at universities and research institutions, and a visit to the interior of the country to speak to the actors in current production efforts. It will also consist of a series of consultations aimed at expanding the Uruguayan biofuels capacity and feasibility.

¶5. Program specifics with budget breakdown follow:

Participation of 1 US expert for 5 days

| | |
|-------------------|---------|
| Airfare | \$2,000 |
| Hotel | \$ 605 |
| M&E | \$ 355 |
| Transportation US | \$ 100 |
| Transportation UY | \$ 500 |

Interpretation (as needed) \$1,500

TOTAL 5,060

¶6. Target audiences: Government officials, private sector, academia, NGOs, media, and general public.

¶7. Purpose and impact: Pursuant the 2008 U.S.-Uruguay Memorandum of Understanding to advance cooperation on renewable energy and energy efficiency, this program will facilitate the scientific, technological, academic, and business cooperation that is the aim of the agreement.

¶8. Proposed length of program: 5 days (2 days in Montevideo, 1 day of travel in country, and 2 days in the interior)

¶9. Name of responsible officer and contact information: ESTH Officer Erin Markley, who can be reached at markleyen@state.gov or Tel: (598 2) 418 7777 ext 2429, or ESTH FSN Cecilia Ramos-Mane, who can be reached at ramoslc@state.gov or Tel: (598 2) 418 7777 ext 2405. Matthewman